

## **Garamendi warns of how climate change may affect Delta**

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By Scott Smith

STOCKTON - If left unchecked, the rising sea levels caused by global climate change could leave Stockton under water, California's Lt. Gov. John Garamendi warned Thursday in a talk to members of San Joaquin County's legal community.

Garamendi spoke at the San Joaquin County Bar Association's annual Law Day luncheon. He said new laws have to address climate change issues that will impact local residents whose lives are inexorably tied to the San Joaquin Delta.

"Yes, Delta water has come up six inches over the last century," he said. "And if you go 56 inches, we're in deep water right here."

In addition to capricious flooding and spells of drought driven by climate change, he said California laws have to account for things such as levees and how water is stored in natural aquifers that supply drinking water.

Attorneys have a say in how the law is shaped when they take related cases, he said. He recommended a mind-set, drawing upon his experiences in the late 1960s with the U.S. Peace Corps in Ethiopia. He recalled that tribes greeted each other asking, "How are the children?"

Making choices that arise from climate change, people often take a short-term approach, brushing aside solutions that set a positive course for years to come, he said.

"I think that's really wrong," Garamendi said, harkening back to the Ethiopian tribes of his youth. "We need to think of the generations ahead."